

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

Martha Anne MacDonald, 84, counselor



Martha Anne MacDonald Palfrey of St. George Street, died at home on Sept. 6, 2010 at the age of 84 after a brief illness. She was the daughter of the late Maxwell E. MacDonald, MD and Sylvia Lovejoy MacDonald. A resident of Duxbury since

1934, she met her husband George Palfrey there in 1936 and grew up sailing and racing with him at the Duxbury Yacht Club. They were married in 1951, celebrating 57 years until Mr. Palfrey's death in 2008.

A graduate of The Winsor School in Boston, Mrs. Palfrey entered Bryn Mawr College at age 16, graduating at age 19. She was featured in Parade Magazine as the first international disc jockey on Boston's Short Wave Radio Station WRUL, broadcasting to various European, Latin and Middle Eastern countries. She later went on to work as a French interpreter for international textile machine companies. She was the first woman to be elected to the Duxbury School Committee, where she served for three terms, and went on to earn a Master's Degree in guidance from Bridgewater State College. She worked as a guidance counselor in the Duxbury school system for 23 years.

Mrs. Palfrey earned her pilots license at age

21 and was an avid sailor and skier throughout her life. She was a member of the Duxbury Garden Club, the local Republican Committee, was a Recreation Department Director and a teacher at the First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church. She served for more than 25 years on the board of the Trustees of the Partridge Academy in Duxbury, which provides local scholarship funds for deserving Duxbury High School graduates. Mr. and Mrs. Palfrey enjoyed retirement by sailing and traveling extensively. They wintered in Tarpon Springs, Fla. where they volunteered with special needs and disabled adults. They also were active with Habitat for Humanity and the Tarpon Springs Unitarian - Universalist Church. They continued to summer in Duxbury and at their Saquish beach cottage, the "Muffin Tin," overlooking Duxbury Bay.

Mrs. Palfrey leaves her two sons, John and his wife Debbie and Peter and his wife Barbara, both of Duxbury; her daughter, the late Ellen Palfrey; her sisters, Dr. Constance MacDonald of Port Ludlow, Wash. and the late Janice MacDonald Doyle; and five grandchildren, Chris, Emily, Hannah, Alex and Sarah, all of Duxbury.

A memorial service will be held on Sept. 19 at 3 p.m. at the First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church on Tremont Street in Duxbury. In lieu of flowers, tax deductible donations may be made in Mrs. Palfrey's name to "The Partridge Fund," P.O. Box 2552, Duxbury, MA, 02331.